



**MCoT News**  
Welcome to the May 2009 edition of The Multicultural Council of Tasmania newsletter

***Promoting Multiculturalism and Harmony in Tasmania***

If you wish to subscribe or unsubscribe please send an email to [mcot@tassie.net.au](mailto:mcot@tassie.net.au) or phone us on 6231 5067 if you would like to contribute items for the newsletter. The deadline for each month's issue is the first Monday of the relevant month.

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## **MCOT NEWS AND UPDATES**

### **From the Chair**

This week saw the launch of Volunteer Week (11<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> May). It is a time for us to reflect on and acknowledge the contribution that volunteers make to society. MCoT hosted a morning tea for its volunteer group the Knitting Angels on 29<sup>th</sup> April and the MRC hosted a morning tea for its volunteers on the 12<sup>th</sup> May.

The efforts of volunteers are increasingly becoming more and more crucial to the continued operations of many organisations particularly in these uncertain economic times when we are

seeing disheartening effects such as funding for many ethnic community councils being cut, often dramatically. It is in times like this that we must be more pro-active and ensure that we, both as individuals and communities are actively involved and participate fully in community forums and consultations. We must ensure that our voices are heard and that our needs and concerns are voiced and noted. In this way we can ensure that the many issues facing CALD communities are acknowledged and provisions made to address these issues for a positive outcome.

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### **Next council meeting**

The next council meeting will be held on **May 20<sup>th</sup>** in the Acacia Room at the Migrant Resource Centre at **7p.m.** Guest speaker will Be Jane Bowman from the Council of the Ageing (COTA), who will explain about COTA's Peer Education Program,

### **May Days**

- 1 **May Day**  
National Day (*Marshall Islands*)
- 3 National Day (*Poland*)  
Constitution Memorial Day (*Japan*)
- 4 Remembrance Day (*Netherlands*)
- 7 Independence Day (*Israel*)
- 9 Europe Day
- 10 Constitution Day (*Micronesia*)
- 14 National Day (*Paraguay*)
- 15 **International Day of Families**
- 17 Norway Constitution Day
- 20 Independence and National Day (*East Timor*)  
National Day (*Cameroon*)
- 22 National Day (*Yemen*)
- 24 Bermuda Day  
Independence Day (*Eritrea*)
- 25 National Day (*Argentina*)  
Independence Day (*Jordan*)
- 26 National Day (*Georgia*)  
Independence Day (*Guyana*)
- 28 National Day (*Azerbaijan*)  
National Day (*Ethiopia*)  
National Day (*Armenia*)

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## **NEWS FROM OUR COMMUNITIES**

### **Norwegian National Day**

The Norwegian Community in Tasmania invites you to join them in celebrating Norway's 104<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a sovereign Kingdom with a dinner at the Australian Italian Club, 79 Federal

Street, North Hobart on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009 beginning at 7.00pm. Dance music provided by "Get Smart". Tickets available from Erik Madsen ph.62296554: \$50 per person.

### **Cretan Association – 68<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Battle of Crete**

The Cretan Association of Tasmania commemorates the anniversary of the Battle of Crete each year by conducting a service to honour those who fought and died in the struggle. The wreath laying ceremony this year marks the 68<sup>th</sup> anniversary and will take place at the Domain Cenotaph on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 09 at 12.30pm.

Thereafter, a reception will be held at the Hellenic Hall, 67 Federal Street, North Hobart.

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## **GENERAL NOTICES**

### **Youth Network of Tasmania (YNoT) – DENIM Conference**

This statewide conference is open to all Tasmanians aged 12-24 years of age who are or want to be involved in their community. If you want to have a say, develop your skills, learn something new or do something about issues affecting young people – this is for you. It is being held at Camp Banksia - Port Sorell (16kms east of Devonport) on the 23 & 25 May 2009, commencing at 10.00 On Saturday and finish at 2.00pm on Sunday. The state youth DENIM Conference is a chance for young people to get together and initiate projects, learn skills and hear from dynamic speakers and engage in workshops in the following areas:

Body Image - Cultural Awareness – Hip Hop Culture – ICT (*Information Communication Technology*) – Mentoring and Leadership – Money Matters – Novice Driver Reforms – Relationships and Sexual Health – Substance Use and Safe Partyng – Use of Public Spaces – Working With the Media.

Visit the YNoT website [www.ynot.org.au](http://www.ynot.org.au) for more information, the flyer and the registration form.

YNoT have also received some donations to sponsor young people's involvement so please don't let the \$99 registration fee be a barrier to participation. The fee includes transport as detailed in the registration form.

Please contact Teresa Moore if you have any questions, by email [eo@ynot.org.au](mailto:eo@ynot.org.au) or phone Teresa or Jossie on 6223 5511.

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### **McoT Knitting Angels Morning Tea**

The third annual Knitting Angels Morning Tea was held on th 29th April at 10.30am in the Acacia Room at the Migrant Resource Centre. Many of the Knitting Angels attended as did the convenor of the Angels, Ms Vicki Miteff. The hard working Angels received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Chairperson of McoT, Mr Davor Perovic, who also commended the Angels for their dedication and hard work. The Angels were joined by a group of new arrivals from Bhutan, Nepal and Karen Burmese who enjoyed the morning tea and were delighted to be able to choose from the wide range of beautifully knitted garments and blankets that were on display.

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## **Book Launch – Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia**

An award-winning book *Human Rights Overboard: Seeking Asylum in Australia* has just been launched in the US and Canada.

The book summarises the extraordinary advocacy of a group of human rights activists concerned about the plight of asylum seekers held in shocking conditions in immigration detention in Australia. The work successfully exposed and challenged cruel policies through the testimonies of those who were imprisoned and those who protested.

The authors (listed below) provide heart-breaking evidence of the journeys of the women, men and children and their lives in detention. The book was awarded the 2008 Australian Human Rights Commission's Annual Non Fiction Literature Award.

Linda Briskman  
Susie Latham  
Centre for Human Rights Education  
Curtin University of Technology  
[L.Briskman@curtin.edu.au](mailto:L.Briskman@curtin.edu.au)

Chris Goddard  
Child Abuse Prevention  
Research Australia  
Monash University

*Further information:* [Scribe Publications](#)  
*Ordering:* [Amazon Independent Publishers Group](#)

### **Reviews:**

“This book reveals something systematically rotten. Not isolated incidents but a repressive structure...” *Australian Literary Review*

“Human Rights Overboard is an important and moving book which deserves to be widely read and discussed.” *Law Institute of Victoria*

“This book reveals and confirms, in detail, all the fears you may have held about immigration detention in Australia...” *Civil Liberty*

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## **International Labour Organisation - Database of disability experts**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a tripartite UN agency that brings together governments, employers and workers throughout the world to promote decent work for women and men, including those with disabilities.

The ILO has a long history of promoting the rights of disabled people to vocational rehabilitation, training and employment and is frequently asked to provide technical advice on laws, policies, programs and services related to disability. The ILO is developing a database of consultants who can assist them to meet the demand for disability-related expertise in various countries with an emphasis on the inclusion of disabled persons in regular and mainstream services. The ILO welcomes CV's from disability experts with several years of national or international experience in research, training, legal issues or project planning/management and evaluation relating to vocational training and employment of disabled persons.

We currently have a particular interest in identifying people with disability expertise in the following content areas: Crisis and disaster, trade unions, human resources, corporate social responsibility, employment, and entrepreneurship.

People with disabilities are strongly urged to submit CV's. A form can be obtained from the MCoT office, this form and your CV, summarizing the relevant experience in the beginning to [disability@ilo.org](mailto:disability@ilo.org) [Top](#)

## **Tasmania *Together* Youth Challenge**

The annual Tasmania *Together* Youth Challenge is underway in schools across Tasmania. The competition is in its second year and encourages all school students from K-Year 12 to express their views on the future through a range of formats. For more information, check out the Youth Challenge web-site: [www.ttyouthchallenge.com.au](http://www.ttyouthchallenge.com.au)

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## **FECCA CONFERENCE**

**Celebrate diversity and support FECCA at the 2009 FECCA Conference**

*“Strengthening Multiculturalism and Building Social Inclusion”*



To be held in Shepparton, Victoria. Come and enjoy the fresh produce as well as the stimulating and informative panel session and plenary topics including: Human Rights for Ethnic and Religious Minorities, Multicultural Youth: Identity and Access, Regional Settlement, Interfaith, Social Inclusion for New and Emerging Communities, and Economic Participation and Skills. Confirmed speakers include:

- Laurie Ferguson, MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services.
- Senator Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector.
- Dr Sharman Stone, MP, Shadow Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
- Dr Tanveer Ahmed, Psychologist and Writer
- Alice Pung, Writer and Lawyer
- Clare Martin, CEO, ACOSS
- Shaun Brown, Managing Director, SBS

Date: October 28-29

Venue: Eastbank Centre, Shepparton, Victoria

For further information and to register visit [www.fecca.org.au](http://www.fecca.org.au) or call 02 6282 5755

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## **PIONEERING DISABILITY ADVOCATE UNABLE TO GAIN RESIDENCY IN AUSTRALIA**

Kenyan Dr Siyat Hillow Abdi is fighting a battle to stay in Australia in order to continue to build a life in Australia.

In 2007 Dr Siyat Hillow Abdi overcame extraordinary barriers to become one of the first blind people to be registered as a teacher in South Australia. This was recognised throughout the disability sector as a significant victory for people with disability in Australia in achieving rights and participation.

Dr Abdi has completed a PhD at Flinders University, South Australia and has published a book (with Brian Mathews) entitled, *The Journey of Somali Refugees with Disabilities in Kenya: Voices of Refugees with Disabilities in the Dadaab Camps*.

Dr Abdi continues to make a strong day to day contribution to the Australian community, through his work supporting newly arrived members of the Ogaden / Somali community. Dr Abdi currently works as a relief teacher for recent migrants and refugees, and acts as a role model for many young people in South Australia.

He was recently offered a senior position in the South Australian Government - a position he cannot accept unless his residency is confirmed.

It is disappointing that Dr Abdi appears to be facing discrimination in seeking to stay in Australia, merely because of his disability, despite his valuable contributions towards making Australia a fairer and better country.

His case was aired on ABC Lateline on May 11. The full transcript is available at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2008/s2567397.htm>

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## **Campfire and Culture**

A celebration of Cultural Diversity in Clarence is being held on 27th June 09 between 4pm. and 7pm. There will be a campfire, music, storytelling, dancing and free food at Rosny Farm (adjacent to Eastlands).

Anyone interested in presenting either a story, dance, song or performance etc is welcome to take part. Please ring Suzanne Schulz on [62458664](tel:62458664) with any enquiries. Otherwise, just turn up and enjoy.

### **General MCoT Information**

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